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**John DeStefano, Jr.  
Mayor**

**Testimony of John Prokop  
Director of Public Works  
City of New Haven**

**Connecticut General Assembly  
Planning and Development Committee  
Public Hearing  
March 10, 2010**

Honorable Committee Members, thank you for allowing me to address you. Currently, I serve as the Director of Public Works for the City of New Haven. I am here today to testify in support of HB 5255 AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL MANDATE RELIEF and in particular Section 2 of the bill, the section repealing Section 47a-42 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

New Haven, like most other communities in the state, faces budgetary choices which become increasingly difficult each year. As the economic condition of our nation and our state lags, New Haven's revenue shrinks. Mayor DeStefano has tasked his department directors with identifying efficiencies and cost saving opportunities; however, some efficiencies can only be achieved with the repeal or reform of certain state mandates.

Currently, the City of New Haven is responsible for the removal, trucking and storage of defendants of an evictions belongings. Considerable man-hours in the Public Works Department are dedicated to this effort; hours that could be spent carrying out the other various function of the department. The City of New Haven must also bear the cost for transporting the items, renting and securing a facility to store these items.

By reforming the state statute that requires towns and cities to remove and store possessions of evicted tenants the city of New Haven could realize a savings of more than \$300,000 a year. A comparable mandate requiring removal and storage of evicted commercial tenants was eliminated in 1997 and according to the Office of Legislative Research, Connecticut is one of only a handful of states that still imposes this obligation on its municipalities.

As a policy matter, we believe the cost should not borne by the City or solely by tenants. One potential option is for the cost to be shared jointly by tenants and landlords. By making it part of the cost of doing business between landlords and tenants, cost and responsibility will be shared evenly and municipalities will be alleviated from the financial burden of this mandate.



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